

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 2 are presented for reconsideration and further examination in view of the following remarks.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1 – 2 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Admitted Prior Art and in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,362,892 to Lee et al. (hereinafter referred to as "the Lee et al. '892 patent").

By this Response, the rejection to claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. §103 is traversed.

It is respectfully submitted that no new matter within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §132 has been introduced to this application.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1 – 2 as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art in view of the Lee et al. '892 patent.

Response

By this Response and Amendment, Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejections.

Claim 1 recites "[a] printer driver, provided at a host computer while said host computer is connected to a stencil printing machine through communications, for setting items of various printing conditions for said stencil printing machine, wherein the various setting items for said printing conditions are displayed; if a watermark print item is selected on the setting items, *a secret operation item* for allowing said stencil printing machine to execute a secret keeping operation for print data is selected accordingly; and information on the items are transmitted, *together* with the print data, to the stencil printing machine." *Present Application*, claim 1,

emphasis added.

Claim 2 recites “[a] printer driver, provided at a host computer while said host computer is connected to a stencil printing machine through communications, for setting items of various printing conditions for said stencil printing machine, wherein the various setting items for said printing conditions are displayed; if a watermark print item is selected on the setting items, a selection screen of *a secret operation item* for allowing said stencil printing machine to execute a secret keeping operation for print data secret is displayed; the items are made selectable; and information on the selected items are transmitted, *together* with the print data, to the stencil printing machine.” *Present Application*, claim 2, *emphasis added.*

Contrastingly, the Applicant’s disclosed prior art discloses a configuration in which a host computer can set secret operation items and execute secret printing. *After* the operation of the prior art stencil printing machine, the user can select a secret button to promptly move to a secret operation or the user can prevent printing until a new stencil sheet is created. However, the stencil sheet remains generally accessible until the operator takes such action. Therefore, using a remote host computer requires that the operator manually direct the removal of a stencil sheet from a stencil printing machine in order to discard the stencil sheet after it is used. In the disclosed prior art, disadvantageously, the secret stencil sheet is exposed to general view during the time between completing a print job and direction of removal of the stencil sheet.

The secondary reference, the Lee et al. ‘892 patent, discloses a system for providing summarized setting information comprising a memory, a display, a printer driver, and user interface. No stencil sheets are disclosed in the Lee et al. ‘892 patent, nor is a secret operation disclosed, expressly or inherently, in the Lee et al. ‘892 patent.

Neither the disclosed prior art nor the Lee et al. ‘892 patent indicates that “information on

the items are transmitted, *together* with the print data.” Moreover, neither the disclosed prior art nor the Lee et al. ‘892 patent indicate that one of the items that is transmitted to the stencil printing machine is “a secret printing operation” as recited in claims 1 and 2.

Neither the word “secret” nor the word “watermark,” as recited in both claims 1 and 2, appears anywhere in the Lee et al. ‘892 patent. The Examiner cited the Lee et al. ‘892 patent for the proposition that printer drivers can “incorporat[e] the printer’s features/capabilities into the printer driver, which allows operator to control printer’s features via a host computer.” As the Examiner has indicated, the “admitted prior art does not teach printer’s features such as ‘secret operation’ can be incorporated into the printer driver, which allows operator to control printer’s features via from a host computer.” However, this assertion misses the point. Claims 1 and 2 recite a secret keeping operation; the Lee et al. ‘892 patent does not teach a secret keeping operation. That a printer’s features are incorporated into a printer driver is not an element of either of the pending claims. Therefore, the admitted prior art and the cited secondary reference is cited for an irrelevant proposition.

All of the elements of the presently claimed invention are neither taught nor suggested by the disclosed background or the Lee et al. ‘892 patent. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejections.

CONCLUSION


In light of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes the application is not in condition for allowance, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney if it is believed that such contact will expedite the prosecution of the application.

In the event this paper is not timely filed, Applicants petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fee deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 14-0112.

Respectfully submitted,
NATH & ASSOCIATES PLLC

Date: December 17, 2004
NATH & ASSOCIATES PLLC
1030 Fifteenth Street, N.W.
Sixth Floor
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 775-8383

By:



Gary M. Nath
Registration No. 26,965
Gregory B. Kang
Registration No. 45,273
Derek Richmond
Registration No. 45,771
Customer No. 20259